

God's Heart For Week 2

Pastor Russ Chambers | October 11, 2026

Main Scripture: Luke 15:1-2, 11-32

Connect

ICEBREAKER

Tell us about a time you were lost, on a road trip, in a new city, or somewhere you did not belong. Did you stop and ask for help right away, or did you keep driving and hope for the best?

Message Snapshot

BIG IDEA

God is holy and righteous, and He seeks the unholy and the unrighteous. His heart is for the far-off and for the people who stayed close and drifted anyway.

STICKY BOTTOM LINE

Prodigal described him, but his last name never changed. It was still son.

REMEMBER THIS

You can be close to the Father's work and far from the Father's heart.

KEY TRUTHS FROM SUNDAY

- The Pharisees asked why Jesus was eating with sinners and tax collectors. Jesus answered with 3 stories, and the last one is about 2 sons.
- The younger son believed freedom meant no one telling him how to live. He ended up in a pig pen. Pastor Russ said God's gentle wrath is sometimes letting us have our way, and that for some of us the pig pen was grace, not wrath.
- The son came home planning to earn a servant's place, but the Father ran to him and started the celebration before the speech could be finished. The robe, the ring, and the shoes said he was a son, not someone merely tolerated.
- The older brother stayed home and served, but he kept count and refused to come in. Pastor Russ said there are two prodigals in this story. One left geographically and one stayed and was far from the Father in his heart.
- Grace is not opposed to effort. It is opposed to earning. The Father goes out to the older brother too, and the story ends without telling us whether he comes in.

Scripture

Read together: Luke 15:1-2, 11-32

Read verses 1-2 first so you know who Jesus is talking to. Then, as you read the story, notice what each son wants, what each one says to the Father, and what the Father does in response.

Discuss

OBSERVE

- 1 Who is gathered around Jesus in verses 1-2, who is grumbling, and what are they upset about?
- 2 In verses 17-20, what does the younger son decide while he is in the pig pen, and what does the Father do while he is still a long way off?
- 3 In verses 25-32, what does the older brother do, what does he say, and who goes out to meet whom?

UNDERSTAND

- 4 Pastor Russ said that some of us are not at a dead end because of God's wrath but because of His grace, and that the wrath was God letting us run as far as we wanted. What do you make of that? Have you ever been grateful for a pig pen?
- 5 Pastor Russ said the town would have broken a pot at the son's feet, but the Father ran and put on the robe, the ring, and the shoes before the speech was finished. What was the Father making sure everyone knew?
- 6 Pastor Russ called this a story about 2 prodigals, and Jesus ends it without telling us what the older brother does. Why do you think Jesus leaves it open for the Pharisees, and for us?

APPLY

- 7 Which brother are you closest to right now, the one who left or the one who stayed? What does that look like in your actual week?
- 8 Pastor Russ gave 4 heart checks: Am I around God's work but neglecting time with Him? Am I offended when someone else receives grace? Do I believe my service makes God owe me? Have I stopped seeing someone as a person I am called to love? Which one is hardest to answer honestly?

Live It Out

Pick the heart check that stung the most. This week, set aside an unhurried block of time with everything else turned down, tell God honestly where you are, and then tell one person you trust what you said, with permission to ask you about it next week. Come ready to share how it went.

Prayer

- Thank God that He is holy and righteous and still comes looking for the unholy and the unrighteous, including us.
- Thank Him for the pig pens that made us look up, and ask Him to show anyone in the group where they are holding something back from Him.
- Confess where we have been close to the Father's work and far from His heart, and ask Him to make us glad when someone else receives grace.
- Pray by name for people who feel too far gone to come home, and for 4 Points Church to keep reaching the least, the lost, and the lonely.

Father, thank You that You are holy and You still come looking for us. Thank You that no matter where we have run or how long we have stayed, our last name is still son and daughter. Soften the places in us that keep count and give us hearts that run toward the people You are welcoming home. In Jesus' name, amen.

HOST TIP Go first on the question about which brother you are closest to, and make your answer honest but ordinary, such as a season when you were keeping score. That makes it safe for the group to answer without feeling they need a dramatic story, and it gives the quieter older-brother types a way into the conversation.